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HRSD/City of Norfolk partnership continues to grow

The value of a partnership cannot always be measured in dollars. However, when a winning partnership also saves nearly \$400,000.00 a year, it's a plus. That is but one of the many advantages to the City of Norfolk/HRSD relationship.

The partnership between the City of Norfolk and HRSD goes way beyond its cost-effectiveness. Extending into customer service, operations, public relations, engineering and planning, this long-term partnership has benefited Norfolk, its rate payers, and HRSD for years.

Now, as the City of Norfolk embarks on its unprecedented 10-year Capital Improvement Plan, this partnership is playing an even more important role in the quality service the Norfolk Department of Utilities and HRSD give to their customers.

Long-time customer service partners

The City of Norfolk provides high quality drinking water to the residents of Norfolk and carries the wastewater away from homes and businesses through the sanitary sewer system. HRSD treats that wastewater.

Because the charges for those services are based on the amount of water used in each household, the city and HRSD work together on the billing process. The Department of Utilities reads the water meters and provides the information to HRSD. This data is the basis for the HRSD and City of Norfolk water-related charges on the Hampton Roads Utility Billing Service (HRUBS) statement received by Norfolk water customers every month.

Through its joint billing service, which combines charges for public services from the City of Norfolk and HRSD onto one bill, HRSD processes the HRUBS bills and sends them to Norfolk customers. This billing service is cost-



Top rt. and lt.: Norfolk is responsible for reading water meters and downloading account data collected from its customer's water meters. Above: HRSD employees not only calculate and print the HRUBS bills, but they also collect and post payments.

saving in that it saves the city almost \$33,000.00 a month — nearly \$400,000.00 a year, a cost that does not have to be passed on to the customer. It is also convenient for the customer who needs to pay only one bill for five public services. For added convenience, both HRSD and Norfolk Utilities collect the payments, so the customer can pay at the nearest location.

The City of Norfolk and HRSD also coordinate and work closely in tap installations and connection fees, delinquent bill collections, and non-payment actions.

The two have also cooperated extensively on public relations and public information activities. The HRSD mail room includes Norfolk's informational inserts in

See **Partnership** on the back.

Partnership from page 1

the city's HRUBS bills. The agency also actively participates in the Hampton Roads Water Efficiency Team and the regional effort to keep fat, oil and grease out of the sanitary sewer systems.

Nowhere are Norfolk Utilities and HRSD more intimately connected than in the day-to-day operations of the sanitary sewer system. All City of Norfolk sanitary sewer lines send wastewater to HRSD lines and pump stations. Therefore, it is important that each agency know what the other is doing because of the impact the operations have on each other. By working closely together, they coordinate repairs and help each other reduce any impact on the customer.

Capital improvements expand teamwork

Over the next 10 years, the city plans to spend approximately \$17 million in sanitary sewer improvement projects each year. The most critical portions of the sewer system will be replaced first. Some projects are already being constructed and some are still in the design phase. However, beginning in FY05, Norfolk residents will see as many as five or six major projects under construction in various areas throughout the city.

The city's coordination efforts with HRSD in the wastewater capital improvement plan are crucial to a positive outcome, and HRSD is already playing a major role in the design and construction of many of the projects.

An example of this teamwork can be found in the design of the first phase of the Chesterfield Heights water and sewer upgrade project. This project, which the city plans

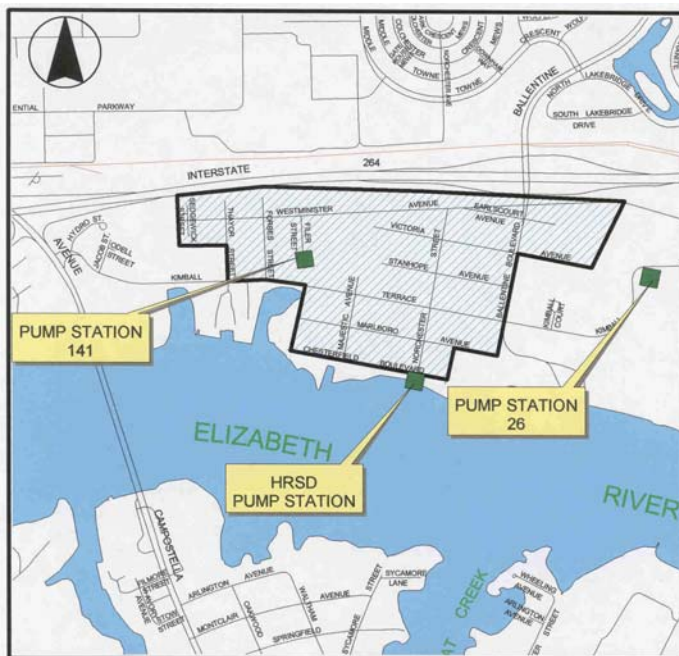
to begin in FY05, includes building a new pump station, deep gravity sewer lines, and water upgrades to improve services to all residents in the area.

As in all such projects, the city's is dedicated to delivering the best possible service to its residents in the most cost-efficient manner. The goal in phase one of the Chesterfield Heights project is to reduce the number of sewer pump stations in the area from the existing three to one, while improving the service. One of the existing pump stations is owned by HRSD, the other two by the City of Norfolk. Having only one pump station in the area will reduce the cost of operation and maintenance, which is an integral part of the customer's charge.

This is a goal that HRSD shares, and the agency is actively participating in the study and design of this project.

In the future, the citizens of Norfolk will benefit from even more cooperative efforts by Norfolk Utilities and HRSD, especially where wastewater capital improvement projects are concerned. Norfolk Utilities has recently created a computer model of its sanitary sewer system — one that is interactive with a model of the HRSD system and will assist in more integrated and highly efficient sewer project designs.

Closely related in their missions, Norfolk Utilities and HRSD have successfully worked together over the years, and continue to constantly strive for more efficient, cost-effective services for their customers.♦



The Norfolk/HRSD partnership is present in CIP projects. One phase of the Chesterfield Heights water and sewer upgrade will reduce the cost of pump station operation and maintenance.

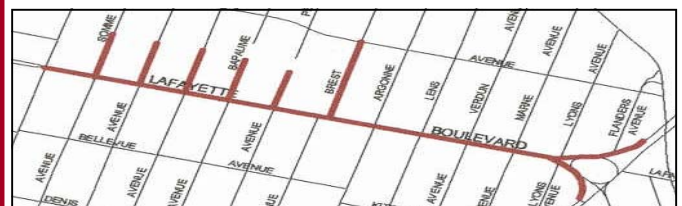
Utilities CIP Update

Lafayette Boulevard improvements

The City of Norfolk continues to improve water and sanitary sewer services to its customers with the Lafayette Boulevard replacement project. In addition to sewer replacements, this project also will include water main replacements where necessary.

The replacement of the water and sewer facilities is complete. Pavement milling and resurfacing are expected to begin in about 45 days, and the scheduled completion is late August 2004.

This \$2.5 million project will improve the sanitary sewer and water services to various residents and businesses along Lafayette Boulevard between Chesapeake Boulevard and Tidewater Drive.♦



The Lafayette Boulevard sanitary sewer replacement project also has replaced water mains where necessary in the area.